

AMENDMENTS TO THE ABSTRACT

Please replace the Abstract with the following paragraph rewritten in amendment format:

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A protective coating reinforced with shape memory alloy (SMA) particles. In one preferred form the coating ~~comprises~~ is a paint that is reinforced with SMA particles. The SMA particles, in one preferred form, are Nitinol® alloy particles. The Nitinol® alloy particles may ~~comprise~~ be formed as cylindrical, oval or spherical shaped particles and are intermixed in a base material of the coating or paint. The SMA particles provide superelastic, reversible strain properties that significantly improve the damage resistance, damage tolerance (e.g., compression-after-impact (CAI) strength) and elevated temperature performance of the coating or paint ~~after~~ it is applied to an external component, without negatively affecting the hot-wet compression strength of the coating or paint.